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ARTICLE III.

REMARKS

ON THE

PHŒNICIAN INSCRIPTION OF SIDON.

By Prof. WILLIAM W. TURNER.

Presented to the Society October 26, 1859.

Soon after the news reached this country that the sarcophagus of Ashmunezer, King of Sidon, had been brought to Paris and deposited in the Louvre through the munificence of a distinguished cultivator and patron of Oriental learning, a request was made to Prof. Henry, the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, by some members of this Society, to procure, if possible, for the use of American scholars, a rubbing of the inscription on the lid, and also of that around the head of the sarcophagus. Prof. Henry addressed the Duc de Luynes on the subject, and the latter promptly and generously complied, sending to the Institution a carefully made rubbing of both inscriptions, and also a copy of his own memoir on the subject. The copies of these inscriptions which you see before you are tracings carefully made from these rubbings; and consequently they exhibit, in their exact proportions, each line as made by the ancient sculptor of this most venerable document. Upon its great philological and historical interest it is unnecessary here to enlarge; it is sufficient to say that it consists of twenty-two perfect lines of from forty to fifty-five letters each, and that the whole number of its characters exceeds one thousand. If viewed merely as an addition to the pure ancient language of the Old Testament, its importance will be evident from the fact that it is almost exactly equivalent in extent to the tenth chapter of Genesis, or to the one hundred and fourth Psalm.

My object in the remarks to which your attention is invited will be to show what is the present state of our knowledge of the contents of the inscription, and to whose learning and labors we are indebted for this knowledge.

By way of introduction to these remarks, I will here give, in a tabular form, the names of all the writers who have published a reading and interpretation of the inscription, arranged chronologically, as near as may be, according to the dates of their respective publications, placing opposite the name of each writer the names of those of his predecessors whose interpretations he had an opportunity to consult.

Author.	*Preliminary Translation.*	*Memoir.*	*Previous Interpreters consulted.*
*Salisbury.	May 31, 1855.	1855.	
*Turner.	May 31, 1855.	July 3, 1855.	
*Rödiger.		June 15, 1855.	
*Dietrich and Gildemeister.	April 25, 1855.	July 1855.	
*Hitzig.		Sept. 1855.	Rödiger, Dietrich.
*Schlottmann.		End of Dec., 1855.	Rödiger, Dietrich, Hitzig, De Luynes (prelim. transl.). In his supplementary remarks (dated Apr. 26, 1856) he makes use of the memoirs of De Luynes and Ewald.
De Luynes.	Aug. 14, 1855.	Dec. 15, 1855.	
Ewald.		Jan. 19, 1855.	Salisbury, Turner, Rödiger, Dietrich, Hitzig.
Bargès.	Feb. 1856.	1856.†	Salisbury, Turner, Rödiger, Dietrich, Hitzig, De Luynes, Ewald (?).
Munk.		April 6, 1856.	Salisbury, Turner, Rödiger, Dietrich, Hitzig, De Luynes, Bargès (prelimin. transl.).
Levy.		End of Aug., 1856.	Salisbury, Turner, Rödiger, Dietrich, Hitzig, Ewald, De Luynes. In his supplementary remarks (p. 59 etc.) he makes use of Munk's memoir.

* From the copies furnished by the American missionaries.

† His memoir appears to have been published after that of Munk. See Munk, p. 27.

The first complete translation given to the world was a preliminary one, the concluding portion by myself, in a paper drawn up by Messrs. Salisbury and Gibbs, and printed in the New Haven Daily Palladium of May 31, 1855. This agrees in all essentials with the versions we afterwards published.

As regards the order of arrangement of the several versions, it should be remarked that, although that of Prof. Rödiger was printed some weeks before those of Prof. Salisbury and myself, yet I have placed the two American versions first, as containing traits in common which separate them from the efforts of European scholars, in consequence of our having exchanged views freely on the subject, with the intention of making a joint affair of the interpretation, before it was generously proposed by Prof. Salisbury that my paper should be given separately.

There is one feature which disadvantageously distinguishes our productions from all the rest; it is the erroneous value given almost throughout to the character . We were led astray by Gesenius's alphabet in the Monumenta, Tab. 1, in which he has given it only the value of ,* although he had correctly read the character as in the third Athenian inscription (Tab. 10), being guided by the accompanying Greek.

A close examination of the legends which he cites in support of this value shows that it is nowhere certain. This error runs entirely through my reading, and ought to have been avoided by an inspection of the alphabet of Judas in his Étude Démonstrative, and of pp. 33-37 of that work, where he discusses the forms of the letter .

We also labored under a difficulty which was shared in by Messrs. Rödiger, Dietrich, Hitzig, and Schlottmann—that of having to work upon the copies of the inscription made in haste by the American missionaries; so that those who had before them the carefully reduced fac-simile furnished by the liberality of the Duc de Luynes after the monument reached Europe, enjoyed a great advantage over us.

The Inscription and the Copies of it.

The copies of the Inscription to which we have access for ascertaining its readings are the following:

Copies of the American Missionaries.—On the 3rd of April, 1855, the Secretary of the Albany Institute laid before a meeting of that body a copy of the inscription received from Dr. C. V. A. Van Dyck, a corresponding member of the Institute, and of this Society, then in Syria. This was promptly lithographed, and

* Gesenius has given (from a Cilician coin) as the earliest form of *Zain*. Between this and the somewhat oblique form (in Cilic. H) he thinks there is a decided difference, and so regards the latter as a *Yod* (p. 284), although he had seen *Zain* in a still more oblique position in Athen. 3.

published in Vol. iv, Part 1, of the Institute's Transactions. A faithful copy accompanies Prof. Rödiger's paper in the Ztschr. der D. M. G. The U. States Magazine of the 15th of April also published a copy made from Dr. Van Dyck's manuscript.

Another MS. copy was sent by Dr. H. A. De Forest, another member of the Syrian Mission, to Prof. Salisbury. This differs somewhat from the preceding (see Prof. Salisbury, p. 229), and generally on the side of correctness.

A third copy in MS. was sent by Dr. W. M. Thomson, also of the Syrian Mission, to Chev. Bunsen in London, who communicated it to Prof. Dietrich of Marburg. This, as published by Prof. D., is decidedly the worst copy of the whole. The fault would seem to be that of the engraver or other persons who reduced it: since it emanated from the same source as the rest. Dr. Thomson, in a letter to Prof. Salisbury, dated Oct. 5, 1855, says: "The copy from which all those sent to America, and most of those to Europe, so far as I know, were obtained, was taken by me."

The copies taken by the American missionaries were evidently made with a great deal of care, and compare favorably with many in the great work of Gesenius; yet, like all copies of unintelligible inscriptions, in which the eye and hand of the copyist are depended upon, they leave much to be desired in the way of perfect accuracy. Hence they are now entirely superseded by the

Copies from the Duc de Luynes.—The Duc de Luynes has published, in his memoir on the subject of the inscription, a beautifully engraved copy of it, made doubtless from a photograph, and from a careful examination of the stone itself. The same plate accompanies the memoir of Munk in the Journal Asiatique; and a lithographed fac-simile that of the Abbé Bargès. The copy appended to the memoir of Ewald was, as he informs us, prepared from a photograph received from the Duc de Luynes; the same, evidently (i. e. from the same negative), that was used by the Duke himself, it being of the same dimensions.

In addition to and above all these materials for our study of this interesting monument is the rubbing, furnished by the Duc de Luynes to the Smithsonian Institution, of the inscription on the breast, and also of that around the head of the sarcophagus, of which latter no fac-simile or engraving has yet appeared.

External Characters of the Inscription.

An examination and comparison of the two forms of the inscription, that on the breast and that around the head, show us that the former consists of twenty-two lines, and the latter of six perfect lines and the commencement of a seventh. Both are

written continuously, without separation of words, and without marks of interpunction or other sign of pause, except a space of over an inch in line 13, which divides the great inscription into two nearly equal parts, which, for convenience, I shall call Parts I and II. The lines are not perfectly straight, being more or less curved, especially towards the end of Part I. Those of Part II are straighter. The spaces between them are irregular, and the letters are by no means of uniform size, those in Part II being generally smaller than in Part I: thus the first ל of למלכי in line 1 is $2\frac{1}{8}$ inches in length, while that of מלכם at the end of line 18 is less than $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch. The difference in size begins immediately with Part II. The letters are also placed at variable distances apart, from half an inch to almost nothing, those in Part II being closer together than those in Part I.

In the size of its characters, and their distance apart, the head inscription agrees with the latter part of the breast inscription. The letters towards the close of the 6th line are pressed very closely together, as if for the purpose of bringing in the whole of the sentence which ends Part I. The 7th line contains only nine whole characters, which form the beginning of Part II; and it breaks off with an unfinished letter in the middle of a proper name (אשמנעזר).

All these facts lead us to conclude, with the Duc de Luynes, that the inscription was first written out with a free hand on the stone (without any drawing of lines or measuring of letters as in modern times), and that these traces were then followed by the artisan. As the first letters of the three first lines of the breast inscription (l. 1. 1–11; 2. 1–12; 3. 1–7), are cut thicker and rougher than the rest, it is evident that the sculptor began to cut three lines at once; but, his work being unsatisfactory, he was either made to continue his task more neatly or was exchanged for a more skillful workman.

From the differences in execution which have been pointed out between the two portions of the breast inscription, it would appear as if it had at first terminated with Part I, Part II being added subsequently. As for the inscription around the head, the general resemblance in the size and style of its characters to those of Part II of the breast inscription leads one to conclude that it was made after this latter; wherefore, it is difficult to say, but perhaps because it was thought desirable to mark indelibly both parts of the sarcophagus as the property of its tenant. It would appear that the original intention was to copy the whole of the breast inscription; but after a few letters of the second part had been engraved, it was concluded for some reason not to add it, perhaps because the ornamental line which runs round the outside of the sarcophagus, about midway of its height, would have made an ugly division of the inscription.

It is true that a different theory has been broached as to the connection between the two inscriptions. The Duc de Luynes having reported the existence of five discrepancies between them, four of which were errors of the head inscription, Prof. Ewald suggested that it was perhaps originally intended to engrave the entire inscription around the head of the sculptured image of the deceased, as if to represent it as proceeding from his mouth, but that the errors made in it caused it to be left unfinished, and the whole to be engraved over again on the breast. An examination, however, of the rubbing of the head inscription shows that three of these errors—viz: the omissions of a letter at the end of its second and fourth lines, and at the beginning of the sixth—have in reality no existence, the letters in question being found in their proper places. The mistake must have been caused by the circumstance that the rubbing from which the Duke drew up his description was not carried far enough; this is shown, too, by the reduced engraving of a portion of the head inscription, which he has given in the side view of the sarcophagus, where a blank appears in place of the initial letter of the sixth line. Of the two remaining discrepancies, one (ממלת for ממלכת, l. 11) is undoubtedly an error of the breast inscription, the other (כאימם for כאישם, l. 5) is considered to be an error of the head inscription.

Allowing this (though not perfectly certain) to be the case, the errors are balanced, and no conclusion is to be drawn from them as to the superiority or priority of the one inscription over the other.

In the breast inscription the forty-fifth character of the 6th line, a ל, was evidently omitted by mistake and afterwards inserted.

The fourth letter of the 7th line of the breast inscription has its shaft slightly curved (a defect exaggerated in Ewald's copy), and has consequently been read by several interpreters as ב. The head inscription, however, presents us with a well formed ד, the letter which the context requires.

In the breast inscription there is a space partly occupied by an irregular depression between the thirty-first and thirty-second letters of the 9th line. The Duc de Luynes correctly remarks that there probably existed here a little flaw in the surface of the marble, which was passed over by the engraver; for there is no trace of any intermediate letter, and in the corresponding portion of the head inscription there is neither intermediate letter nor space.

At the bottom of the large flaw in line 17th, the Duke has also observed that we have the word אשמן, at first written erroneously אממן, but with the tail of the first מ partially obliterated, so as to convert it into a ש: thus, .

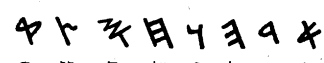
So far we are led by a comparison of the inscriptions themselves, which shows us, among other facts, that ancient engravers were not immaculate, even in the execution of a monument of such importance as the present: so that modern scholarship is not to be denied the right of exercising a sound and sober discretion in occasionally correcting the readings they present.

On comparing with the rubbing of the breast inscription the copies of it that have been published, a variety of minor discrepancies are perceived. We will notice, however, only the most important.

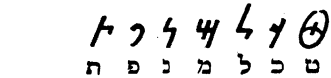
In the printed copies the thirty-fourth letter of the 7th line is a מ; in the rubbing it is a perfectly plain ש, the letter required. From this it is evident that the copy published by Ewald, which exhibits the same error, was not made exclusively from the photograph which he received from the Duc de Luynes.

Of the seventh letter of line 16th, at the beginning of the lamentable flaw made by the stroke of a pickaxe when the sarcophagus was exhumed, the copies present us only with the upper portion of a broken-off and almost perpendicular stroke; whereas in the inscription itself there are preserved both the upper portion of the descending shaft and the greater part of the hook of a ח, making the letter perfectly certain. So, too, the printed copies represent the twenty-third letter of line 20th as entirely obliterated by a minor flaw, whereas the marble itself exhibits clearly the upper part of the letter מ.

Before concluding these remarks on the external features of this inscription, I will call attention to one curious peculiarity in the forms of the Phœnician letters, which does not seem hitherto to have attracted especial attention: it is that, of those letters which have a well defined descending shaft, some turn, in descending, towards the right, and others towards the left, so that the whole alphabet may be divided into three portions:



turned to the right;



turned to the left;

neutral.

If it were asked in which category it would be possible to include these last, I would answer that the ב might be placed in the first, and the ז, י, and ש in the second. The characters of the Marseilles inscription agree precisely with ours in this respect.

The origin and significance of this peculiarity it may be difficult to explain. But the degree of fidelity with which it is retained will probably serve as a valuable test in determining the comparative age and character of inscriptions. The mere perception of the fact will evidently be of great use in identifying imperfectly formed or mutilated characters, as is exemplified in the inscription under consideration, where two rather imperfectly formed צ's (l. 16. 10, 15), were read by the American copyists, and most of the interpreters who followed them, as ת, and where the ך of the word מלך in l. 2. 5; 14. 31; 15. 33 (made with an upturned hook, like the ך of the Marseilles inscription) is read by Schlottmann as ו—mistakes which would not have been made, had the characteristic inclination of these several letters been duly observed.*

Although the inscription, as it has been remarked, was written on the marble without any attempt at perfect uniformity in the form and size of the letters, yet the work was done with such care and neatness, and the characteristic features of each letter were so well preserved, notwithstanding the slight variations in their forms, that there is no difficulty in distinguishing any of them, except in a few instances the ד and ר. The characteristic differences of the three letters ב, ד, and ר, are well exhibited in the words דבר (l. 2. 17–19), and ידבר (6. 27–30), where it will be seen that, while the down stroke of the ב curves strongly to the left, those of the ד and ר are straight, and inclined in the same direction, but distinguished from each other by that of the ר being much longer than that of the ד. From measuring a number of examples, it would appear that the normal length of the entire down stroke of the ד is about equal to twice the outer length of the loop; that is, that the portion below and clear of the loop is about one-half of the entire length, while in the ר this lower part is half as long again. These proportions, however, have been frequently departed from, and in some instances so far as to be actually reversed; so that, for instance, the ד in 9. 20; 14. 33; 15. 38 has the proportions of a ר, and the ר in 16. 29 and 18. 14 is about the proper length of a ד. Here, of course, a satisfactory explanation of the context can alone decide between the two letters, and it is chiefly on this account that the proper reading of several passages (in lines 6, 19, 21), still remains undecided.

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* The peculiarity of the Phœnician alphabet here referred to is fully illustrated in a MS. volume, prepared by Mr. Turner, with his usual industry and thoroughness, in which different forms of the letters as presented by the inscription, to the number of three hundred and thirty-four in all, in exact fac-simile, are arranged together for comparison, under the head of the separate letters. The volume may be examined in the Library of the Society. COMM. OF PUBL.

As has been remarked, the whole inscription is written without space or points to separate the words. Yet the correctness of our division of the words is confirmed by the observation of the Duc de Luynes, that, out of the twenty-two lines of the inscription, only four—viz: lines 5, 7, 9, 12—end in the middle of a word, while all the full lines of the head inscription end with a perfect word. In three instances—viz: lines 4, 6, 11—the conjunction ו is placed at the end of a line, and in one instance—l. 21—at the beginning. Hence we may conjecture that it was regarded as an independent word.

Reading and Translation.

The following reading and translation of the inscription are the result of a selection made, to the best of my ability, and I trust without partiality or prejudice, from the views of all the writers enumerated.

*(Here insert Transcript and Translation.)**

The principle on which credit has been assigned to the several elucidators of the inscription must here be explained. By referring to the table before given, it will be observed that the entirely original interpreters of the inscription—that is, those who had no previously published lucubrations to consult—are Salisbury, Turner, Rödiger, Dietrich and Gildemeister, and De Luynes. In those portions of the inscription where they agree, the interpretation has been regarded as their common property, and no mark of authorship is attached; but where they differ in opinion, the initials attached indicate the author or authors of the reading or translation adopted. Where another interpretation is adopted as more satisfactory than that of either of the writers named, the initial of that author is attached to it by whom it was first given to the world.

It is by no means intended to abuse your patience by going into a discussion of the value of every rendering that has been

* We cannot too much regret that this important part of Mr. Turner's paper has been left a blank by his untimely death: his nice discernment would doubtless have helped us much to see where we stand as regards the interpretation of the inscription. The fragment which follows is, however, all that we have to indicate the conclusions to which a review of the whole ground had brought him. Being but the beginning of a critical discussion of the difficult passages, which our lamented associate designed to give us at a later meeting of the Society, it was not read by him when the previous part of the paper was presented. That Mr. Turner had carefully prepared the way for such a discussion appears from a volume in his own hand, found among his manuscripts, which exhibits in parallel lines the several interpretations of each line of the inscription; and from critical notes on each publication on the subject which had come out either in France or Germany. But it is not deemed just to his memory to submit to the public eye what he evidently regarded only as an apparatus for his own use. Comm. of Publ.

suggested. A mere comparison of all the published interpretations will show that the true meaning of more than three-fourths of the inscription may be regarded as perfectly clear and certain. My observations will therefore be confined to the more plausible renderings of the difficult and doubtful portions, and in remarking on them I shall endeavor to be as concise as the nature of the topic will allow.

The repetition of the date of the king's death in numeral characters, after writing it out in full—the very practice resorted to for increased certainty in modern times—shows, as Dietrich well observes, that we have here, as in the Marseilles inscription, an illustration of the commercial experience and accurate business habits of the Phœnicians.

The first really difficult passage commences with the last end of the second line. The interpretation adopted is that of Gildemeister, who renders: 'I was snatched away before my time (comp. בִּלְאֹ עֵתֶךָ Eccl. vii. 17) among those who look for (length of) days; then was I laid to rest (דֻּמִּית i. q. Heb. נִדְמֵיתִי); without a son I was brought to silence (אֶתַּמְת i. q. Heb. נֶאֱלַמְתִּי):' meaning that, while entertaining a reasonable expectation of a long life, he died prematurely without posterity. This interpretation, it is true, is not so simple as to carry instant conviction of its correctness; yet it consists of words and meanings authorized by Hebrew usage, and is grammatically constructed: taken altogether, it is the most satisfactory yet proposed. As for the word חלת, it clearly denotes, says Dietrich, "something artificially dug or hollowed out; and as the sarcophagi in Phœnicia and Syria consist of a block of stone chiselled out, and a stone lid, it evidently means the stone trough which can thus be closed."

The word קנמי, in line 4, has been variously explained; but the only interpretations which seem to require notice here are those which derive it from the Talmudic קנם, and render 'my curse, imprecatory prohibition, or adjuration,' or which regard it as the Syriac ܩܢܘܡܝ 'I myself.' "The words קנמי את כל ממלכת," says Munk, "evidently begin a new sentence, and can by no means be attached to what precedes, as several interpreters have thought, for it is perfectly evident that here, as in lines 6, 10, 11, 20, the word ממלכת is opposed to אדם. This being the case, we must give up the idea of seeing in קנם the Syriac word ܩܢܘܡ 'person,' and of translating קנמי by 'my person, myself.'" The word קוֹנֵם figures in the Mishna among different expressions used in making vows or oaths, and which, according to the statement of the Talmudists, were borrowed from the language of the heathen (Babyl. Talmud, tract Nedarim, fol. 10). Hence nothing is more

natural than to render קנמי by 'my adjuration,' the suffix showing that we have a substantive here. It was first suggested by Prof. Ewald that the word ממלכת is not to be taken precisely in the sense of the Hebrew מַמְלָכָה 'kingdom,' as it had been by preceding interpreters, but rather in that of 'magistracy,' i. e. 'magistrates.' This idea, that the word denotes a superior class of persons, in opposition to the common people, has been adopted by all the subsequent interpreters, who render variously 'royal persons' (Bargès), 'royal race' (Munk), 'nobility,' i. e. 'nobles' (Levy). Munk says: "The word ממלכת designates the 'royal family' or all those in authority, to whom are opposed the 'common people,' designated by the term אדם, just as אָדָם is opposed to שָׂרִים 'princes' (Ps. lxxxii. 7), and בְּנֵי אָדָם to בְּנֵי אִישׁ (Ps. xlix. 3) and to אִישִׁים (Prov. viii. 4)."

The best explanation of the obscure passage after the words אל יבקש in line 5, appears decidedly to be that of Prof. Dietrich, who renders: 'nor seek with us treasures, as with us there are no treasures.' The expression בן, i. q. Heb. בְּנוּ 'by or with us,' corresponds precisely to the לן 'to us' of line 18. The word מנם he renders 'treasures,' and derives it from the Heb. מָנָה 'to divide, apportion, allot;' whence מִנִי 'lot, fortune,' and מָנָה 'portion.' On this Munk observes: "The group בנמנם appears at first somewhat difficult, and has been variously interpreted. The most natural explanation, it seems to me, is that of M. Dietrich, adopted also by the Abbé Bargès. I had fixed upon it myself, before becoming acquainted with the translation of these two scholars, and M. Dérenbourg had arrived at the same solution. This concurrence of opinions seems to prove that there is more in it than a mere conjecture. Accordingly I read בן מנם, i. e. בְּנוּ מָנִים, and render: 'let them not seek treasures by us.' The word מָנִים (plur. of מָנֶה 'the weight of a mina') might be used to denote large quantities of silver or gold, treasures; just as in the Mishna מעות (plur. of מַעָה 'copper coin') is used for money in general. The ancient historians have recorded many facts which show that under certain circumstances tombs were rifled in the hope of finding treasures in them." This is fully elucidated by Dietrich, who has collected many interesting proofs of the fact, with specimens of similar adjurations in ancient epitaphs. כ is i. q. Heb. כִּי 'for' (so the Duc de Luynes); אי is a negative, i. q. Heb. אֵין used with participles, and also אי (so Dietrich), and שם pass. part. שִׂים (Dietrich), or act. שָׂם (Munk). As for the construction, comp. וְאֵין אִישׁ שָׂם עַל לֵב 'and no man layeth it to heart.' Is. lvii. 1.

The great difficulty in interpreting the first portion of line 6 is how to reconcile it with the similar passage in l. 20. If we read ואל יעמס נב משכב ז, considering נב as the elevated base of the sarcophagus with Dietrich, or the body deposited within it,

as suggested by myself, it is necessary to suppose an ellipsis of the particle 'or' or 'and' before the word עלת 'cover;' and if, with all the later interpreters, we regard ך [of נב] as a suffix, and render 'let them not lay upon me the cover of another resting-place,' then the passage in line 21, 'let them not lay upon me' or 'burden me,' is imperfect, and requires an ellipsis which, although adopted by several, is so violent as to be altogether inadmissible. The difficulty, however, can be removed by considering נב to be synonymous with עלת, which its etymology as given by Dietrich readily allows, and rendering it 'top' or 'roof.' We have, then, the following terms applied to the different parts of the tomb: קברי, the excavated sepulchre or burial vault; משכב, the couch, or entire coffin, as in 2 Chron. xvi. 14 (Schlottmann contends that it is the interior space in which the body is deposited); חלת, the hollowed part forming the trough or body of the sarcophagus; * * * * * *